Unemployment rate remains at 4.3% in March

Media Release

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Source: Labour Force, Australia, March 2026

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 4.3 per cent in March, according to the latest data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Sean Crick, ABS head of labour statistics, said: 'The number of employed people rose by 18,000 and the number of unemployed people fell by 4,000 in March.

'The unemployment rate remained steady at 4.3 per cent, whilst the participation rate fell by 0.1 percentage points to 66.8 per cent.

'Growth in employment was driven by full-time workers, which rose by 53,000 people in March. This was partly offset by a fall in part-time employment of 35,000 people.'

Full-time employment rose for both males and females, increasing by 29,000 and 24,000 respectively.

Both the number of males and females working part-time fell this month, down 19,000 and 16,000 respectively.

Hours worked up 0.5% in March

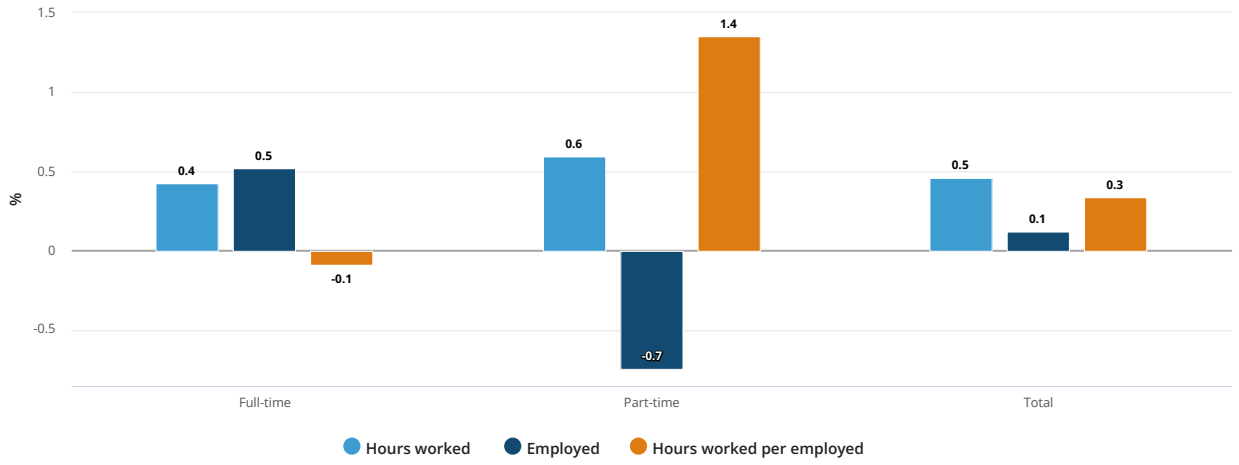
'This month people worked 9.2 million more hours, with full-time hours increasing by 7.1 million and part-time hours increasing by 2.1 million hours,' Mr Crick said.

The 0.4 per cent rise in full-time hours worked was supported by the 0.5 per cent rise in the number of people employed full-time.

Part-time hours worked rose 0.6 per cent, despite the 0.7 per cent fall in part-time employment.

'This meant that on average, a person working part-time worked 1.4 per cent more hours in March than they did in February,' Mr Crick said.

Hours worked and Employment - monthly change



Source: Labour Force, Australia Tables 1 and 19

Trend unemployment rate at 4.3 per cent

'Both trend employment and hours worked grew by 0.2 per cent in March. Annually, the number of hours worked grew faster at 2.0 per cent, than employment, which grew at 1.4 per cent,' Mr Crick said.

Labour Force modernisation

The ABS is modernising how it collects data in the Labour Force Survey, helping to publish high quality labour market statistics, while making it easier and more convenient for people to complete our surveys.

'The transition to our new system starts in April and when complete, it will give survey participants a modern, easy and secure way to complete the Labour Force Survey,' Mr Crick said.

'We are managing this transition with care to ensure our data remains accurate, trustworthy and secure.'

Information on how the ABS quality assures Labour Force data during times of change (/articles/how-abs-quality-assures-labour-force-data-during-times-change) is published alongside the March 2026 release of Labour Force, Australia.

More information is available in the Modernising the Labour Force Survey (/media-centre/media-statements/modernising-labour-force-survey-april-2026) media statement.

We thank everyone who participated in and supported this survey.

Media notes

- The March survey reference period was from 1 March 2026 to 14 March 2026.

- The April survey reference period was from 29 March 2026 to 11 April 2026.
- Numbers may not be additive due to rounding.
- For any media requests, email media@abs.gov.au (mailto:media@abs.gov.au) or call 1300 175 070 (9am-5pm Canberra time) with your questions and deadline.
- If you would like to provide feedback or seek clarification on any of the Labour Force Modernisation changes, please email labour.statistics@abs.gov.au (mailto:labour.statistics@abs.gov.au) .
- Please attribute the 'Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)' when using our data.
- Explore our Data Crash Course (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ie2K3PNejU4&list=PLR8_RxifMwL4JQTxYclMANzga67VBlyhj&index=11) for guidance on finding and interpreting ABS data, and subscribe to our release notifications (https://www4.abs.gov.au/ausstats/notifications.NSF/Web+Pages/ABS+Email+Notification+Service?OpenDocument) to stay updated.
- Information on how the ABS will release market sensitive releases during a website or API outage (/welcome-new-abs-website#market-sensitive-releases-during-a-website-or-api-outage) .